

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please note that all pending claims are shown below in clean form for clarity. A marked up version of the claim amendments is attached.

Please amend the claims to appear as follows:

D¹³ 1. (Three Times Amended) An isolated protein characterized by an ability to form a complex with receptors of the Tumor Necrosis Factor ("TNF") superfamily including the cytoplasmic domain of CD40, said isolated protein comprising an amino acid sequence having 70-100% homology to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or a fragment thereof said isolated protein characterized by an ability to form a complex with receptors of the TNF superfamily including the cytoplasmic domain of CD40.

3. (Previously Two Times Amended) The isolated protein of claim 1 further comprising the amino acid sequence depicted in SEQ ID NO: 4.

5. (Previously Two Times Amended) The isolated protein of claim 1 wherein said isolated protein is a fragment, said fragment comprising the amino acids 54-362 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

D¹⁴ 6. (Three Times Amended) The isolated protein of claim 1 wherein said isolated protein is a fragment comprising the amino acids 274-362 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

19. (Two Times Amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the isolated functional protein of claim 1 or functional fragments thereof and a pharmaceutical acceptable carrier material.

D¹⁵ 20. (Two Times Amended) A pharmaceutical composition for treating a CD40-related disease, said pharmaceutical composition comprising:

D¹⁵ at least one compound produced by interacting the isolated protein of claim 1 or said fragment thereof with other protein components of the CD40 mediated signaling pathway, and detecting the at least one compound's effect on said interaction; and
a pharmaceutical acceptable carrier material.

23. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 19, further comprising the amino acid sequence depicted in SEQ ID NO:4.

24. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the isolated protein of claim 5 together with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier material.

25. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the isolated protein of claim 6 together with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier material.